



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

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TREASURER ANGELIDES APPLAUDS ASSEMBLY PASSAGE OF BILL TO ALLOW FUEL-EFFICIENT HYBRID VEHICLES INTO CAR POOL LANES

Assembly Bill 2628, Sponsored by Angelides, Moves to Senate on Strong, Bipartisan 58-14 Vote

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California Assembly today passed, on a 58-14 vote, a bill sponsored by State Treasurer Phil Angelides that would open the State's carpool lanes to fuel-efficient hybrid electric vehicles. Angelides and the author of the bill, Assemblymember Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), say the legislation would help clear California's air, boost the State's energy independence and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The legislation, AB 2628, passed on a strong bipartisan vote, with 15 Republicans joining 43 Democrats to send the bill to the Senate for further action. The bill is also sponsored by the California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

"The Assembly vote today is an important first step toward opening up the State's carpool lanes to hybrid vehicles, a smart move that will help clear the air, reduce our dependence on polluting fuels and save motorists time and dollars," Angelides said. "And it comes at an especially important time, as gasoline prices are skyrocketing and the need is growing to encourage clean and environmentally sound technologies."

AB 2628 would allow hybrid electric vehicles, or HEVs, that meet tough emissions and fuel efficiency standards access to California's high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, or carpool lanes, regardless of the number of people in the vehicle. The legislation would take full advantage of the available capacity in the State's HOV lanes while encouraging California motorists to use less fuel. Under the legislation, the hybrid vehicles that would be eligible today for HOV access would include the Honda Insight, Honda Civic Hybrid and Toyota Prius. As new hybrid vehicles are developed, they too will become eligible for HOV access if they meet the strictest emissions and fuel efficiency standards.

The state legislation would take effect only after the federal government acts to approve the use of HOV lanes by hybrid vehicles. Federal authorizing legislation is now included in the pending surface transportation funding bill. (Federal approval is required because federal funds are used in the construction of HOV lanes.)